Claims 1-4 were previously pending.

Claims 1-2 are amended.

New claims 5-14 are added.

In view of the above, it is submitted that claims 1-14 are pending for consideration herein.

II.   REJECTION OF CLAIMS 2-4 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112(1)

Page 3 of the Office Action rejects claims 2-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a ways as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

In support of this rejection, item 6 cites specific recitations of claim 2 and claim 3 respectively as to the "effectiveness of a sales campaign..." and the "success rate of the monitored sales campaign" -- and then asserts that mention of "effectiveness and success of sales campaigns..." appears only in the single paragraph at page 13 beginning at line 13.

The Applicant notes frequent discussions of "service information" and "sales campaign information" and the apparatus which processes same, with reference to Fig. 3 and pages 9-10 and, further, with reference to Fig. 4, as to apparatus for monitoring "the success rate of each sales campaign and the success rate of each channel (media)..." with calculations of the "potential value of customers" and scoring of "customer and channel compatibility" thereby to determine "the best channel for...[each]...customer." (Page 9 at lines 4-22) Further, the channel selector 1563 "...determines which channel...is effective in obtaining a successful sale during a sales campaign for the customer. The scoring is calculated as a sum of several factors...." (Page 9, lines 22-26) Moreover, the "monitored per-channel success rate..." is used to avoid overloading one more highly effective channels relative to a less effective channel...thereby to enable adjustments which makes it possible "to improve the success rate of a sales campaign and to provide effective business support."

Also, the discussion of Figs. 5-7 at pages 10-13 provides a clear teaching of the particular apparatus and/or devices of the business support system 100.

The single paragraph at page 13, lines 13-20, cited by the Examiner, is merely a brief

summary of all that has been described theretofore.

Therefore, in view of the above, the withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

III.   REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-4 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Pages 3-4 of the Office Action reject claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Melchione, U.S. Patent No. 5,930,764.

Melchione relates to a sales and marketing support system using a customer information database. Melchione includes the central database (1) storing a large amount of data and centralizes data in the same format from various information sources 21 through 25 to the central database 10. The central database 10 of Melchione serves as a single repository that stores all information related to customers, which is available for a banking institution, at a predetermined period (daily, weekly, or monthly). The information stored in the central database 10 of Melchione is analyzed to retrieve a customer corresponding to a certain sales target and to inform target customers to a branch manager of the banking institution. Thus, Melchione discloses a system for aiding marketing to the banking industry. The central database 10 of Melchione corresponds to the database 65 in Figure 1 of the present Application.

Claim 1 (as amended) recites, "service request production means for producing service information request data in a predetermined form for an external processing system in response to a request of a user from a terminal apparatus used by the user, said terminal apparatus being a one of a plurality of different communication.means; . . ."

Melchione centralizes all information to the central database. Melchione does not disclose "an external processing system in response to a request of a user from a terminal apparatus used by the user, said terminal apparatus being a one of a plurality of different communications means." Melchione does not disclose the latter feature. Further, in Melchione, information is not produced "in response to a request of a user from a terminal apparatus used by the user, . . ." Any information in Melchione is maintained in the central database 10 therein, and is processed internally.

Therefore, in view of the amendments and remarks above, the Applicant submits that

claim 1 is not anticipated by <u>Melchione</u>.

Claims 2-4 are dependent upon claim 1, which for the above reasons is not anticipated by <u>Melchione</u>.

Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

IV.   REJECTION OF CLAIM 1 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Page 4 of the Office Action rejects claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by <u>Matsuo</u>, JP 10-145451.

Claim 1 (as amended) recites, "service request production means for producing service information request data in a predetermined form for an external processing system in response to a request <u>of a user</u> from a terminal apparatus <u>used by the user, said terminal apparatus being a one of a plurality of different communication means</u>; . . ."

<u>Matsuo</u> relates to an information request relay method and device, in which requested text is converted to a command stream. However, <u>Matsuo</u> does not disclose producing service information request data in a predetermined form for an external processing system in response to a request of a user from a terminal apparatus used by the user, said terminal apparatus being a one of a plurality of different communication means. <u>Matsuo</u> does not disclose the terminal apparatus used by the user, as claimed. Further, <u>Matsuo</u> does not disclose the terminal apparatus being one of a plurality of different communications means.

Therefore, the Applicant submits that claim 1 is not anticipated by <u>Matsuo</u>. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

V.   NEW CLAIMS 5-14

New claims 5-7 recite features not taught or suggested by the applied art. New claims 8-14 correspond to claims 1-7 but are written in non means for language. Therefore, the Applicant submits that new claims 5-14 are in condition for allowance.

VI.   CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: 11/18/02   By: _____
                                       Jon H. Muskin
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please INSERT as the first paragraph beginning at page 1, line 1, with the following paragraph:

- -This is a continuation of International Application PCT/JP99/02642, with an international filing date of May 20, 1999, published in English under PCT Article 21(2). - -

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please AMEND the following claims (all of the claims are listed below):

1.   (ONCE AMENDED) A business support system comprising:

service request production means for producing service information request data in a predetermined form for an external processing system in response to a request of a user from a terminal apparatus used by the user, said terminal apparatus being a one of a plurality of different communication means;

data form conversion means for converting the form of the service information request data produced by the service request production means into a form that can be processed by the external processing system and also for converting service information provided from the external processing system in response to said service information request data into said predetermined form; and

service information providing means for providing the service information converted into the predetermined form by the data form conversion means to the terminal apparatus originating the request for the service information.

2.   (ONCE AMENDED) The business support system as claimed in claim 1, [wherein] further comprising:

sales campaign monitoring means for monitoring the effectiveness of a sales campaign based on the service information provided to customers; and

service information determining means for deciding which type of service information should be provided to customers depending on the effectiveness of the monitored sales campaign.

3.   (AS UNAMENDED) The business support system as claimed in claim 2, further comprising service channel determining means for determining a providing means for providing service information to the customer depending on the success rate of the monitored sales campaign.

4.   (AS UNAMENDED) The business support system as claimed in claim 3, further comprising adjusting means that ensures that no one providing means for providing service information determined by the service channel determining means is overloaded.

Please ADD new claims 5-14:

5.   (NEW) The business support system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said plurality of different communication means include a telephone, a facsimile machine, and a computer terminal.

6.   (NEW) The business support system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:
    data management means for managing the service information converted into the predetermined form by the data form conversion means; and
    determining means for determining whether or not the service information is updated by accessing the external processing system,
    wherein said service information providing means provides the service information converted into the predetermined form by the data form conversion means from the data management means to the terminal apparatus, based on a determination by the determining means.

7.   (NEW) The business support system as claimed in claim 6, further comprising:
    accessing means accessing the external processing system to sending the service information request data converted into the form that can be processed by the external processing system so as to obtain the service information in respect to the service information request data, when the determining means determines that the service information is not updated,
    wherein the service information obtained from the external processing system is converted into the predetermined form by the data from conversion means, managed by the data management means, and provided to the terminal apparatus by the service information

providing means.

8.   (NEW) A business support system comprising:

a service request production unit producing service information request data in a predetermined form for an external processing system in response to a request of a user from a terminal apparatus used by the user, said terminal apparatus being a one of a plurality of different communication unit;

a data form conversion unit converting the form of the service information request data produced by the service request production unit into a form that can be processed by the external processing system and also for converting service information provided from the external processing system in response to said service information request data into said predetermined form; and

a service information providing unit for providing the service information converted into the predetermined form by the data form conversion unit to the terminal apparatus originating the request for the service information.

9.   (NEW) The business support system as claimed in claim 8, further comprising:

a sales campaign monitoring unit monitoring the effectiveness of a sales campaign based on the service information provided to customers; and

a service information determining unit deciding which type of service information should be provided to customers depending on the effectiveness of the monitored sales campaign.

10.   (NEW) The business support system as claimed in claim 9, further comprising a service channel determining unit determining a providing unit for providing service information to the customer depending on the success rate of the monitored sales campaign.

11.   (NEW) The business support system as claimed in claim 10, further comprising an adjusting unit ensuring that no one providing unit for providing service information determined by the service channel determining unit is overloaded.

12.   (NEW) The business support system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said plurality of different communication unit include a telephone, a facsimile machine, and a computer terminal.

13.   (NEW) The business support system as claimed in claim 8, further comprising:

a data management unit managing the service information converted into the predetermined form by the data form conversion unit; and

a determining unit determining whether or not the service information is updated by accessing the external processing system,

wherein said service information providing unit provides the service information converted into the predetermined form by the data form conversion unit from the data management unit to the terminal apparatus, based on a determination by the determining unit.

14.   (NEW) The business support system as claimed in claim 13, further comprising:

an accessing unit accessing the external processing system to sending the service information request data converted into the form that can be processed by the external processing system so as to obtain the service information in respect to the service information request data, when the determining unit determines that the service information is not updated,

wherein the service information obtained from the external processing system is converted into the predetermined form by the data from conversion unit, managed by the data management unit, and provided to the terminal apparatus by the service information providing unit.